

This is about how my life was growing up in the mining camps in Arizona. I will begin it with when my parents met and on to when I began to remember how life was then.

BACKGROUND

My dad William Ferris Pritchett was born August 18, 1884 near Tuscarora, Elko, Nevada. He was on the 1900 Federal Census living in Fairview, Sampaete, Utah and moved to Phoenix sometime prior to his mother's death on October 17, 1903. In Phoenix, he and his brother John Lester had a blacksmith shop, which was located in Phoenix, Arizona near 14th Street and Van Buren. He died October 05, 1951, in Walker, Arizona and was buried on the Good Hope mining claim in Walker, Arizona.

My mother, Ina Laurie Fletcher, was born November 20, 1893, at Liberty County, Georgia. She was raised in Florida and worked her way out west demonstrating for Calamet Baking Powder Company. She was in the Clifton/Morenci area of Arizona before coming to Phoenix in 1915-16. She was introduced to her girlfriend's (my Aunt Ruth, Daddy's baby sister) big brother and was married to him three days later. That was my dad. He had two children, Richard and Glen, from a prior marriage that lived with their mother Lydia Agnes Snyder Pritchett in California. My mother died in Tucson, Arizona on October 19, 1966, and is buried in Prescott at the Odd Fellows Cemetery.

On September 27, 1917, my brother Worth Everett was born and shortly thereafter (about two weeks), my parents left Phoenix in an "open Ford" to visit some mines where he wanted to work.

It was November 17, 1919, it was snowing and my parents and brother were traveling to Prescott, Arizona. They were near Kirkland, Arizona when it looked like they might have to stop to give birth to me. They continued however until they reached the Southeast corner of Montezuma and Catlton Streets in Prescott, where I was born in the bay window room of the house, which still stands at that location. At that time, the house was used as a maternity home. From what I have been told, my parents had been living at various mines in Arizona including Vulcan and Buckhorn mines over by Wickenburg.

MY EARLY MEMORIES OF LIFE ON THE DESERT

My first memories are from about the 3 - to 4 years of age. I can remember that we lived in the desert and that it was hot and dry. I have snapshots (photos) that show "bath time" as a tin tub of water warmed by the sun, outside. We always had kittens to play with and I learned very early not to touch the bright stars on the kerosene lampshade. There was a wide sandy wash nearby where when it looked like there would not be any danger of a flash flood, we would build rock buildings, only to be washed away when it did rain. I can remember at Christmas time, we had lots of sparkling things like stars, and a brightly decorated tree (or bush). Santa always came in the night leaving some toys, a stocking of oranges, nuts and sweets. It was a real time of magic. In the winter months, we did have the bathtub inside the house. We had to warm the water on top of a wood stove. Wood was scarce in the desert, but there were pieces of old buildings around from the old mines that were active in the late 1800's when several mines had been active.

One story that has stayed in my mind (probably because I heard "Momma" being teased a lot about it) was an incident at one old house we were living in. "Momma", Worth and I saw a snake. "Momma" was so afraid that Worth and I would go and play with it, that she set out to kill it. She began throwing pipe fittings at the snake from a pile located near the house. Soon some cowboys came by on horseback and she asked if they could help her kill the snake. Their comeback answer was "lady that poor snake will never move again with all of that iron on top of him". She was teased the rest of her life over that one. "Momma" kept us amused and taught us how to make doll people out of burned matchsticks. We would glue pieces of cloth on them for clothes. She also showed us how to write our names on a Manzanita bush leaf.

"The next home I remember was near where the Constellation Mine is near Wickenburg, Arizona. It was called the Vulcan Mine and I have pictures of it in a photo album. The Constellation Mine was not yet developed when we lived there; it came in after we left. We lived in a small house near the mine. My dad and a man named Lou Huber, a world war one veteran, became partners. We called him "Uncle Lou". He lived in Phoenix and would bring us food from A. J Bayless Stores in Phoenix and help "daddy" at the mine. Later they added a third room to the house and created a cellar for food storage from a mineshaft that was located near the house. The cellar was dark and cold and had a ladder going down. They built a sloping door over it to keep it cold. One day I closed the door while my brother Worth was down in it. Yes, I got in trouble, a severe talking to! That was the last time I did that. We were never allowed to play down in that cellar. We had the kittens to play with and would go down to a big wide sandy wash to play in the sand. We played in cardboard boxes until Worth got stung on his back by a scorpion and me on the heel. I didn't get very sick but Worth seemed to handle it better than me. We treated the wounds with ammonia and mud. We never were lacking for play. We had burros hanging around and we played with and rode. We had a milk goat and one Billy goat that would butt us with his horns and knock us down."

"When we would go to Wickenburg for provisions, we would get a treat. One scoop of ice cream at the drug store, at a fancy metal table with matching chairs that had scrolled high backs. Somehow, ice cream has never tasted as good as that. At the shoe store, they had some thin transparent scorpions that would curl up if you held them in your hand. They were free to customers and we cherished them and played with them for as long as they would live. During periods of heavy rain, the Hassyampa River would rise. Only the men were allowed to cross using a cable seat. They would go across, get the supplies and come back with their arms loaded. There was no bridge. The ride home was over a slippery and muddy desert road until we reached the sandy wash near home. If the water in it weren't too deep, we would drive up the wash until we came to the road that took us up to the house. Sometimes an adult would have to push the car up the steep hill. There were times that we had to sit at the edge of the wash before we dared to drive in it because the water was too swift and deep. I don't think the house was more than 7 - 10 miles from town, but travel was slow and it seemed like it was a long, hungry ride home. That store bought bread tasted so good (only the center though), and by the time we got home, "momma" was lucky enough to have some crust for breakfast. We always got our

little treat, which was a small piece of candy about 1 inch around. One day my brother got punished and was not given his 7 pieces of candy. I remember we sat on the cellar door and I gave him 4 pieces of mine. I heard about that one too, for years. He was always sharing with me and it seemed he was always good. Yet, I know he must have been in trouble too. We never got spanked for our wrongs, however "daddy" had a loud swearing voice and a mean cold stare in his eyes. When he spoke and looked at us, we were too scared to challenge him. I have often wondered just how my mother ever handled the hardships of cooking for the miners and caring so well for us. Let alone keeping up the laundry with the scarcity of water, using hand made lye soap on a scrub board."

When I was about 4 years old, my mother got very ill. The doctor in Wickenburg could not help her so she went to California to stay with her brother Arnon, his wife Lessie. They had one son just 1 year older than me and one just younger than Worth. She entered the hospital and was operated on for gangrene in her fallopian tubes. She nearly died. The doctor told daddy that she had only 1 chance out of 100 that she would live through the surgery and had only a few hours to live if she didn't have the operation. Her condition was considered worse than if she had blood poison. Daddy had a nervous breakdown as the result of having to tell the doctor to operate on the mother of his children. He would be standing by the window of my uncle Arnon's beach cabin and when a car would go by he would faint. It was so scary, but uncle Arnon was there to care for him. The beach house was up on stilts and the ocean waves would wash up under the cabin. We were always expecting it to fall down. Quite a change for a couple of desert kids in all that water. I remember, as we were driving back and forth to the hospital, there were posts in the water near the road and I thought they were people's legs sticking up from the dead. It left scary thoughts in my mind. One good thing though I often think of is that on our one-way drive in the old open car to California, there was Daddy, Uncle Lou, Worth and myself. It was Worth's 7th birthday. We stopped before dark to make our camp along the desert road. After dinner, a nice diamond shaped birthday cake, (about 5 by 7 or 8 inches) with yellow candles and dark chocolate icing. What fun to see in the middle of the desert at dusk. I have never known if it was something Mamma made before she left or if Daddy or Uncle Lou made it, or if it had been bought. We always had our birthdays honored.

Christmas was also always a very memorable time. We never got anything but a new box of 8 crayons, some drawing paper, a very small toy and a stocking of oranges, nuts and candy. We always had a tree, even if it had to be a decorated mesquite bush with thorns. It was always a pretty thing and Santa Clause always came Christmas morning and we got before dark to see what he had left.

At Easter, the Easter bunny always brought some eggs, a basket with cotton chicks and bunnies and candy. Sometimes a new pair of socks hidden in the pretty green grass in the basket. The baskets may have been used 2 or 3 years before but we didn't care in that 'rabbit' brought it and we had to hunt for it until we found it.

Halloween, we got dressed up scary. Mostly a sheet over our heads. No neighbors, so

we 'trick-or-treated' our parents. We always got candy and an apple.

Valentine's day we always got little white candy hearts with sweet nothings printed on them.

Other holidays we made picture cutouts of shamrocks, bells for New Years, etc. Cut out president's pictures on some president's birthdays. We always made scrapbooks of old magazine pictures. I looked forward to paper dolls out of "Pictorial Review" magazines.

When I turned 5 and Worth 7, he hadn't had school yet. Daddy built our first schoolhouse. It was big enough to hold more than the minimum of 8 kids it took for an accommodation school before we could qualify for a teacher. Since there was only one other family, (they owned a goat ranch close by) there were not enough children to qualify for a teacher. My uncle Lou would bring children up from Phoenix who were run-aways or in some other kind of trouble, possibly headed for reform school. They and the teacher lived with us or slept in the schoolhouse and ate with us. Worth had not had school other than what Mamma had taught him till he was 7 so he progressed rapidly and was 2 grades ahead of me.

It seems we never knew loneliness. The family went to dances in Phoenix at a place called the Riverside dance hall. A big dance floor in the center with a wood fence fencing the dance area from the table area. You had to pay five cents per dance. Worth and I used to use up our parents dance tickets and dance away. Didn't know what we were doing, but had fun following the music and making the other adults mad at us. No alcohol was permitted. There were other children with parents but we never made friends of any. They had barn dances there too and we sat on bales of hay. I remember the other kids, and myself sleeping on the bales of hay when we got tired. Then the adults would have their turn to dance. I remember just before my second year in school, mamma ordered me two new dresses. One was brown and the other turquoise. I got to wear them to the dances. During that time, we had one of the delinquent girls, Edith, who was about 16 staying with us. Mamma made her a real fancy pretty chiffon pale aqua dress. That night on the way home, she went to sleep and the dress fell off of her lap and fell onto the grill of the heater located in the floorboards of the old Studebaker Inline 8 car we had. Mamma was able to repair the burned spots but it was never as pretty as it was originally. I cherished my two dresses and wore them for as long as they still fit me.

While I was 4 - 5 years old, my mother's sisters and mother and father, all came to visit us at separate times. Also, her brother Arnon and his family from California would come and visit. His son "Sonny Boy" Joe would spend some summers with us. He was in age between Worth and I. One time Grandma (Fletcher) was out walking along the old road up on the hill by the mine and saw a snake. She seemed to be flying off of that hill over bushes and all. The sun was setting in back of her and she looked like her legs were so much longer then they really were.

Our parents and Uncle Lou had friends in Phoenix. The Smiths had five girls. The youngest was 3, then 5 (my age), 6, 8, and ten. The Jones family had four children. They

were all older than Worth and I, but they all visited us. Mr. Smith was a radioman and hooked up our first radio. It ran off of daddy's generator and we heard it through earphones. When we went to visit the Smiths in Phoenix they had a big home and a swimming pool. Worth and I never wanted to get out of that pool. We enjoyed helping to clean it. The Jones lived out by some packinghouses and they had lots of fig trees and bees. One night a big packinghouse caught on fire. We were up all night watching it burn and boy! Did it ever stink? Another time, after a heavy storm, we could see dead chickens and dogs and junk floating down the canal that went past their house. We never wanted to play in that water again.

As time went on, Daddy built another small house for his blacksmith shop and he had poisons and acids in there. He used it to melt ore and gold and clean it. It was called his lab. No one was allowed in there because of the poisons and acids. He did blacksmithing there also. The forge was outside, and he had a big anvil where he hammered the hot iron. He would have us kids pump the bellows for him on the forge.

Worth had not had school other than what mamma had taught him till he was 7, so he quite progressed rapidly and was two grades ahead of me. (My second grade teacher was Miss Kimble.) He never ate his pencils and crayons like I did. Daddy lifted the erasers out of my new pencils and filled the metal caps full of quinine. The bitter taste never stopped me, however. So my quota was shortened and I had to make them last longer. They thought it was why my teeth grew in yellow, but later learned it was minerals in the water. I always had yellow stained teeth, which I hated.

I do have good memories of my early life in the desert though. We were loved and we were happy kids.

Now for a change to life in the foothills of the Bradshaw Mountains of Arizona.

When I was eight, the family decided to move to the Prescott, Arizona area. We wound up at the Poland Mine located on the Big Bug Creek. Daddy and Uncle Lou had a lease on the Poland Tunnel that extended through the mountain to Walker, Arizona. The tunnel had rails, on which ore was moved from the Sheldon mine. When the Sheldon mine was active, Walker and Poland were pretty big towns. The big mine fell about my eighth birthday.

There were several big trucks hauling everything we owned, and it seemed we traveled so long and into the night. When we arrived to Poland Junction on highway 69, just beyond. we started on to the mountain road, it was snowing so heavy, sleeting and blowing so we had to stop. We stopped at a ranch, the people's name was Kaywood. I never knew if the adults had plans ahead or not. Anyway, we stopped because of the snow. Finally, when we could move, we traveled a very narrow scary road along side the Big Bug Creek until we got to a big yellow house on the Dick Wolcott's ranch. We arrived there on my eighth birthday, November 17. They lived across the road from the big yellow house. He had lots of grapes, fruit & berry plants, raised chickens and sold eggs. We moved into that yellow house and started back to school in an old mine building that was cleaned up

for a schoolroom. I think it was third grade I completed there. Dick Wolcott's brother had two or more kids. A Mexican family whose father either worked for or with daddy, had four kids, so we had a school. It was different than in the desert, we had to have a fire and wood. The oldest Wolcott boy, Jack, about twelve, got ornery one day and didn't want to cut wood, so the teacher went to cut it. Jack got too close to the axe and she sliced his arm open by accident. The town of Mayer was the closest, about ten miles. How they ever got him there to sew him up, I'll never know. This was my third grade, but I can still remember all of those kids names: Julia and Cruze Barra, half brother and sister to Albert and Bonnie Lopez, Jack and Betty Wolcott, Worth and I. The teacher's name was Miss Bailey.

One night after a big snow, a lion got in the Dick Wolcott horse corral and killed one of his horses. They dragged it down the road to dispose of it. I never knew how. Anyway, it left a spattering of blood down the road. Daddy had built us wooden sleds and while we were riding them and blowing our harmonicas, I was reluctant to let my sled go in the horse blood. Soon we got more snow and covered it up and then on with the fun. One morning, very early, I was woke up by my parents and as I opened my eyes, I saw this huge lion skin, head still on, held up. The lion killer had just killed it and they wanted me to see it. Needless to say, I dove to foot of the bed until it was gone. That was my first look at a mountain lion. Dick Wolcott would never let us ride "Lady", the remaining horse, as she became very spooky and would side-jump at the slightest movement. As we got older, he did let us ride her one-day, I was on back and a slight shy caused me to slip off and when I fell, I just missed falling into a Century plant. I was about twelve then, and that was the first and last time I ever rode her.

As summer came, daddy was building our house up the hill off of the Wolcott land. We lived in the yellow house that summer. It was so nice, fruit trees and berries. Mamma canned fruit all summer. Daddy made home beer and Worth and I had to pick hops that grew on the two-hole toilet to use in the beer. We didn't like that job for the smell. Glad, so glad we didn't drink beer! I remember we had to carry water from the creek and heat it in a narrow long black boiler tub for the laundry. And, help scrub the clothes on a scrub board. Rinse in two waters and hang them on clotheslines or fences to dry. The dirty socks stunk so badly we would try to get out of that job. There were old roads and tunnels to explore, and cold water ran out of the side of the mountain. It was so nice and pretty and a deep hole with water dogs and big bella (oval) shaped pincher bugs in the creek. We didn't care; we enjoyed the swimming hole and loved to try to catch the Scooter bugs. They were so fast, it's a wonder we never got stung or bit. Summer was great. There was a railroad track that came up the canyon to the Poland Mine and big roundtable (turnaround) below the tailing dump. We enjoyed playing on that as the trains only came up once a week to haul ore to the smelters in Humboldt and Mayer. A putt-putt car with a Mexican crew always came up ahead of the train to check the tracks out for safety. It was fun to see. The train was used to bring supplies and mail to put on the ore car to send to Walker, back when Poland and Walker were thriving mine towns in the late 1800's. When we were there in the late 1920's, they were only ghost towns.

Finally, we got to move into the house that daddy built out of some old mine houses and

out houses still standing from when the Poland was a thriving town. Some years before our time, the tunnel had caved in and at one time daddy had it opened half way. We got to ride into the tunnel on the ore car. What a thrill that was. There was lots of water running out of the tunnel, it had turned the rocks white as it was very hard water and was filled with zinc and other minerals. The tunnel was very cold and still has water running out of it. The water runs across the mine dump and down into the creek. No one could drink the water because it was considered poisonous. Our new house had three rooms and was far from the creek water. We dug a hole in one of the canyon draws, up past our house. It was up hill from the house and we made a narrow trail up to it. It was a great spring for water as long as we had rain and snow. In the summer, we had to keep it scooped out. Centipedes, scorpions and spiders would fall in it so we had to strain the water through a cloth and keep them scooped out. When the water got down to only 2 to 3 inches deep, we had to dip it clean and dry. The hole was about 3 feet deep and filled with dirt and leaves during the rainy season. Our chores consisted of carrying water from there, keeping the spring clean, gathering pine cones and pine needles in burlap sacks, splitting pitch pine nuts for kindling, sawing and stacking wood. Daddy did most of the chopping till we got older. I asked for an axe for my ninth Christmas and got it. \$1.09 from the Montgomery Ward catalog. I cut one green oak tree down, 2 inches in diameter. It took me a couple of days. I more or less abandoned the wood chopping after that. It wore me out. Worth was permitted to use the sharp double bladed axes. I had plenty to do, to carry and stack the wood, and I loved to rake up pine needles and wood chips.

Daddy and Dick Wolcott piped the Poland water to our house and Dick's orchard. He built a wooden tank; it was our swim tank in the summer time. Our skin would dry out so bad that we looked like alligator skin. Oh well, it was better than the steep hill down to the creek. That summer, Dick gave Worth and I a Mickey Mouse figurine. I still have Worth's, but mine got stolen when we rented out our house during World War II. Our house was right close to the railroad tracks. We use to walk on the tracks and balance on the rails. Worth and mamma could walk across the trestles crossing over the deep canyons. Worth was impatient with me, as I was so scared of the height. He would scare me by saying a train was coming. Big Brothers! In the winter we would sit on a snow scoop shovel (shaped like a big spoon) and slide down the steep railroad bank. Sometimes we would use our burlap bags we were supposed to fill with dry oak limbs for firewood. It didn't take long for us to wear holes in the bags. So much of our food came in big 100-pound burlap sacks. Sugar, flour, potatoes; so we always had them. My mom would tear up old worn out clothes into strips to make hooked rugs on some of the bags. The white cotton ones was used for quilt backings, dish towels, sheets, pillow slips. She would crochet fancy edges on them and embroidery them for table clothes. She even made us shirts of them on a treadle sewing machine. She could turn an old shack with cracks in the walls 1 inch wide, into a nice comfortable home. Apple crates nailed to the walls for cupboards and a fancy curtain over it to keep the dishes clean. She would cover the walls by tacking magazines and newspapers on the walls. We had fancy wallpaper made from the Saturday Evening Post Norman Rockwell paintings. Lace doilies covered the boxes for tables and Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners were always served on a white linen tablecloth complete with napkins. We always had to be careful not to spill and stain them.

In the fall we picked black walnuts to shell out when it snowed and we had to stay inside. We would shell for cookies and candy. Each Christmas we sent my Grandmother a quart. The black walnuts have a green shell on them and under that are small white worms. There was two ways to prepare them for cracking. Daddy made us a board with different size holes in it to hammer the green nut through to skin off the green shell. Or, we could spread them out on a canvas to dry and when the shell got dry, hard and black we use a hammer to drive the nut through a hole in a piece of metal. Then came the tough job. On a flat iron, (what we used to iron our clothes) to break the outer shell and use a nail or nut-pick to pick the meat out. It took a long time to get a quart of them, but Grandma Fletcher always sent us a big box of citrus candy she made out of citrus fruit peelings.

Time for school again. I was ready for the fourth grade now. Daddy moved mamma, Worth and I into Humboldt for school. We lived in an old mine house and there were a lot of small cabins used for miners had been blown or torn down. Those were used for wood. There were lots of old wood shingles good for kindling.

Our next-door neighbors had a girl, Pearl (Lillian) Shultz, the same age as me. She had an older sister and two older half-brothers and one baby brother, but she is the one I played with. There were also a couple of boys whose father ran the town bakery, so we now had some other kids to play with. The big and beautiful black and white schoolhouse looked more like a courthouse. It was all so new to us. Worth seemed to handle it fine, be he was in a different room from me and I missed him so much and kids weren't very nice to me. I spent a lot of my time in tears. Each classroom held about 24-30 students, half was third grade and the half was fourth grade. Fifth and sixth grades were together, and so on.

My dad thought girl clothes were not warm enough for me and made me wear long underwear with opaque stockings pulled up over it with boy's ankle high shoes. Mamma made me some dresses and made over some clothes my aunts had sent. One aunt worked in the silk shop in Lakeland, Florida and Grandma Fletcher sewed for all of her five girls who were still living there. So they mailed us some of their throwaways. Mamma would make these over for me as best she could.

Daddy would cut my hair so weird. Shingled high up the back, long sprigs in front of my ears, hair parted in the middle with straight bangs across my forehead. Frankly, I looked like a freak and I felt it. The kids called me "Lorraine Lorraine, the long necked crane". This is what put me into tears. I was already scared of so many kids. The shape of my head just wasn't right for that kind of a hair cut and I was already tall and skinny for my age. No Shape! It did teach me to not look badly at someone that didn't look perfect, and that looks did not make the person. It was bad enough that I was a slow learner. Worth was smart and fast like most big brothers. One day a nice little pretty dark haired girl came to me to comfort me and walked me home and on to her house up on a hill. She was so sweet and nice to me I could never forget her name, Ruth Gook. (I met her again in "Senior Adults").

Daddy would take us back to the mountains on the weekends until the roads got too snowed in. This is how I learned that there wasn't any Santa Clause, as we had Christmas on Christmas Eve. We went to visit an old lady in Humboldt and when we got home, Santa had already been there. So were daddy and Uncle Lou. I got a big doll, not nearly as exiting as Worth's red wagon. Nothing was right or fun. Pearl and I never passed the fourth grade, we were the school "dummies."

We moved back to the mountain home for another summer. That was the year daddy had the Poland tunnel partly opened. I think he did have some ore out of it. Worth and I spent a lot of our summer hiking and hunting for burros so we could ride them. Uncle Dick Osmundson use to bring his son Richard from Jerome for visits. We enjoyed playing with him, he was younger than me. We experienced lightning storms in the tall pines of Big Bug Mesa. Once while hiking, we could smell food, good food. Hot bread, beans, and apple pie. We followed our hungry noses and came upon a ranch. It was the Dandera Ranch. Yes, we got fed and "mmmm" was that ever good. We became to know these people and enjoyed hunting burros in that area. There was a remains and sawdust from an old sawmill on top of the mesa and it was fun looking for anything-worthwhile picking up. We found where there had been a home. We called it the violet patch. There was green grass and purple nobles growing heavy there. It smelled so good there. There were lots of current and gooseberry bushes we picked from and loads of elderberries that the pigeons would fill up on. Mamma hiked the Big Bug Mesa too. One day she heard a scratchy noise and when she looked, she saw 2-3 baby lions climbing a tree. She was scared and took off straight off past some cliffs. She never thought at the time that the mother lion might have been in the cliffs. There were old bleached logs (we could see them from our house) still laying in the draws of the mountain and was an easy way down, that is why she went that way. It scared her later but we were thankful that mama cat never got her. The bleached logs were left there for years from when the sawmill was active. They would have gone down on the railroad, but when the mine shut down, they were just left there.

This summer, Worth and I each got a rabbit. New Zealand Reds from an ad in a magazine, and we began to raise rabbits for food. He named his "Tuppens" and mine was "Bonnie". We bred them by Dick Wolcott's buck. Bonnie killed and ate her young, she had two chances left before we later had her in rabbit stew. Daddy built us some nice screened hutches up off of the ground. Tuppens raised many litters and later we sold meat to other people.

This is also the summer that our Uncle Dick (Osmundson), daddy's sister's husband (who worked in Jerome) brought daddy's oldest son Glen from his first marriage. Glen was looking up his dad. Later, Uncle Dick brought daddy's second son Richard, and finally Jimmy, daddy's brother's son. All three boys were there that summer. Daddy was very anxious to get them to work in the mines. It turned out they didn't want any part of it. So one by one they left. Uncle Dick came and got Glen who later joined the Navy. He later sent Worth and I a silver dollar which we cherished until adulthood. We wouldn't spend it for anything. Richard hid his clothes in the forest and ran away. He later asked

mamma to mail his clothes. Jim was still there when we moved back to Humboldt for another year of school.

One evening daddy came in; he had been to town having Jim arrested. Jimmy had stolen all of his guns and anything else worth money and had run away in daddy's car. He didn't get very far, only as far as Prescott. Daddy got most of his belongings back.

Daddy's way of keeping us in line was: he had a razor strap, a piece of leather 2 feet long and 1 inch thick. It hung on the doorknob. All he had to do was to look at us and we obeyed his orders. He never used it on Worth or I, but I learned as an adult that he did use it on his eight younger sons by Alma (Chumbly). One has confessed to me that it disappeared into the big old heater stove.

Another year of school in town and we were more used to it now. Worth had become close friends with Albert Lopez, the same boy who was in school with at Big Bug. They were hiking all over, hunting wild horses in the Mayer and Humboldt area and little sister couldn't keep up so we began to grow apart. His sister Julia and I were friends and I had Pearl, even though she had a crush on a new boy (George Goswick) in class. His dad had cattle and family lived at Poland Junction. He had a sister named Jewell who was in Worth's room, and a younger sister Edna, in second grade. Pearl and George later married and raised a son. Theirs was a long courtship and she had his initials painted on everything from shoes to jackets.

There was a mining engineer, Fred Gibbs, who worked in Poland with daddy. He, with his family lived in Humboldt and he drove up to the mines everyday. His wife was in poor health and her mother also lived with them. They had three children, Don, Fay (second grade), and then Johnny the baby. We knew him for several years. He used to give Worth and I his lunches in trade for mamma's home cooked beans. He would stop in to play Mamma's piano and sing to the top of his voice. We all looked forward to his visits. Well that winter I had my first job. His wife paid me ten cents per hour to push Johnny's baby buggy around and Fay would walk with me. She and I became friends and she knew how unhappy I was with my "boy" shoes. We would meet under the bridge on our way to school and she would trade me her pretty black patent leather shoes and pink, bleu or white bobby socks. She would then wear my old brown socks and boy's brown shoes for the day. We did this almost all year and I thought I was Miss Queen Bee. I shall always be grateful to her for that and I'm sure her mom never knew what she did. Her dad was such a nice, giving person. He would have been proud of her for sure. This summer we got a chance to go to a ranch down creek that had a lot of apricots growing on it. I was asked to come help can fruit in exchange for some apricots. We ate apricots with our oatmeal that winter. There was a young girl, and a boy older than Worth that came to live with us. I'm guessing that uncle Lou brought two more troubled teens to help with work. Lorraine, a pretty redhead, helped mamma cook and Jim Montgomery helped Worth and daddy at the mine. I didn't like Jim as he was mean to me and monopolized all of my brother's time. He and Worth wouldn't let me to in their special sleeping room that they made in the chicken coop. Lorraine had a nice paper doll collection that she gave me. I still have this collection along with pictorial and

McCall magazine dolls. I became very interested in designing their wardrobes and naming them. Worth and I drifted apart and were never as close as always before.

I finally got through the fourth grade. So did Pearl. We moved back to home and daddy had built a cabin for our school, only it was decided the teacher stayed in it and ate with us. Something we had to get now were additional kids from Phoenix in order to get out required quota of eight. There were some local kids, but school was in our living room at our house. Mrs. Hansford was our teacher and we were so mean to her. I have often felt ashamed. We did such things as lighting a piece of fuse, placing it on her chair and making her believe it was dynamite and would blow up. She would call a quick recess that lasted until the end of the day. I never knew it then, but she had a Down syndrome daughter and was actually a wonderful person. As I grew up, I felt so sorry for her. She and I wrote letters back and forth for years long after.

That Easter we moved to a ranch called the Old Taylor Ranch. Here we had an abundance of fruit trees. There were two houses, one was once a bunkhouse and had several bedrooms and a big porch around it. The main house was a two-story, regular old ranch house. Two big orchards with a footbridge across the creek. Water was piped from the creek to the orchard and the house. As the creek began to dry up, daddy and Dick piped and ditched the Poland water down along side the railroad track, then ditched is down to the ranch. It could be directed to all the trees and garden on that side of the creek. Strawberries as big as golf balls grew along the ditches. All we could ever want. The old garden had rubash, asparagus, onions, and all still growing hardy. Sweet William flowers grew thick across the creek. Those Taylors must have really had a green thumb. The place practically fed us. Blackberry vines were so thick and heavy they looked more like a green building. One day, mamma was out on a ladder on top of the vines when the old ladder broke in with. Did she ever get scratched up! She canned so much fruit that year we ate off of it for two or three years after. Our first summer on the ranch, Worth and I spent many hours building little play towns. We had our small three inch long metal cans we collected over the years. We used a whole hillside and had a rodeo grounds, ranches, etc. Our houses and cows were pinecones. Cowboys, were a forked stick, 4" high, dressed as a cowboy, chaps, hats and all. We later made them with a safety pen to wear as a lapel pen and sold them at the dances for a quarter each.

One night that winter in the night the Dandera family, grown sons and dad came by in a terrible snowstorm with their mother. She was on a chair fastened to a sled, to get her to Poland Junction and on to the hospital in Prescott where she later died of pneumonia. They stopped by for hot cocoa and coffee. It was a bad storm and where they lived, the snow was probably 3-4 feet deep. An ambulance could never have made it. There was a telephone at the powerhouse and a family lived there.

This year we were able to get a teacher for just Worth and I. Our classroom was on of the upstairs rooms, low on both sides like attic rooms mostly are. It was big enough for our teacher and us. She slept in one of the bunkhouse rooms mamma had fixed up. Her name was Alma Chumbly from Higley, Arizona. She later became my step-mom and raised eight sons. This is the year I got a mental block for numbers, I just couldn't get

fractions and decimals. She kept me in “schoolroom” all night trying to get me to grasp it. To this day, I do not understand them.

As I said before we raised rabbits, but we never got them moved down to the Taylor Ranch, a mile or so from what we called our other house. It was being called the “Upper Camp” by now. Worth and I would cut some of the fresh alfalfa that grew on the old ranch and carry a burlap bag full up to our rabbits every day. It was a long walk, but those rabbits loved it. Later we did move them down to the ranch where we could sell more to the people driving by during the summer the months. Tuppens died of old age so we went out of the rabbit business.

Living on this old ranch was a real joy except this turned out to be a very unhappy year for us. Mamma and dad broke up as a couple. Mamma, Worth and I moved back to the “Upper Camp” and daddy and Alma stayed on the old Taylor Ranch. Their son was born in Phoenix. My brother went to work with my dad and they got a new teacher for me for my 8th grade. She, Frankie Hunte lived in the little cabin that was originally built for school and it was teacher and I. I never liked history, never could remember war dates, etc. and she was very good to me and allowed me to skip history. Until, mamma went into Prescott for my 8th grade diploma, and was refused because my history test had not been turned in. Well Mrs. Hunte had to stay two weeks without pay to teach and test me on history. I’m afraid I didn’t retain much of, as she would read it to me then coax me through the test answers. She was a lenient teacher all year. She was boy crazy, so every time a cowboy or miner came by, she would have nature study. We would go for a walk in the direction that the man went. Naturally, I would rather do that then to read and learn, as I was a poor student anyway. I did learn that children should be taught to learn very early in life. I always depended on my big brother to learn it and to then take care of me.

The next summer mamma and I grew a garden and she canned fruit. I got so tired of squash, corn and string beans as we had ample to eat of from the garden. Things were tight money wise. She had some chickens and did sell some eggs. We had a young cow for milk. Uncle Lou would still come and bring us some food from Phoenix. He brought Worth and I each a new twin mattress, only Worth’s had been packed next to some wheat or stale flour. It had a strong odor, but Worth didn’t mind.

The railroad tracks had been pulled out and they were using the railroad bed for automobile use. They pulled all of the trestles down as they became dangerous, and built detours around for cars. One day as I was out walking I discovered some men working on the detour close to our house. I began to talk to the men and learned that one had two daughters and they and his wife were due to come visit him one day soon. I got interested and wanted to meet them. One was just older and the other just younger than myself. I invited the men to our house for dinner. The second man was single, and his name was Casey. We all became friends and Casey came often to court mamma and he would take both of us to Mayer to the dances. There were a lot of CCC boys there to dance with. We went dancing at the Yarber Gulch schoolhouse too. As I mentioned, we had a cow and it was my chore to milk her, even on dance nights. After I had washed my

hair, the cow would pee on her tail and then whap me around the head with it. Casey finally felt sorry for me and would milk the cow on dance nights. Casey courted mamma, but had me to contend with. The girls and I palled while the roadwork was going on then the family moved on. Later years the girls were back and were Worth's first dates. Mamma and Casey were soon married and moved to Summitville, Colorado where he worked in the cyanide mill there. Daddy would not let Worth and I go with them, we had to stay. I learned how to change diapers, cook and do laundry. I wasn't too happy.

The county paid \$10.00 per month for rent in Mayer for a big old ten-room house near the school. This is where we went to high school. Not a happy memory for me. Worth was in the tenth grade and I was in the ninth grade. The house had no running water, only a cook stove. There was a fireplace in the living room where the red velvet couch was. The story was that there had been a murder in the house and I just knew the couch had blood on it so I stayed out of there. Worth wanted his own bedroom so I had my own bedroom too. I was scared to go to sleep. Our water came from a neighbor's garden hose. It was so cold in the winter. Dad brought wood in for the cook stove but we did very little cooking. We mostly ate raw oats, canned milk and graham crackers. Oh, how I yearned for mamma's warm cooking. I did very little homework because it was so cold, I would go straight to bed to keep warm. I was a horrible year I wish I could forget. There was a CCC camp outside of town and Worth would go there to learn to wrestle and play ball with the boys. I was afraid to stay alone in the old house so I spent many hours at the main street gas station sitting on a stool by the store visiting with Mrs. Garret, the owner's wife until Worth would come for me. I was so lonely, needless to say I didn't get much out of that school year. The four grades were combined in one room. Lessons were combined, ninth and tenth grades had the same studies and so did the eleventh and twelfth. Geometry, what was that? I never found out, however they passed me on a "red 5", the lowest grade. They didn't want me back there. So much for my high school year! I never knew what was going on. I wanted to play ball but the boys had monopolized all of the basket and baseball equipment. I owned two dresses and the girls all made slurring remarks to me. A boy would come to see my brother and the girls were all ready to scratch my eyes out. I had a few lower grade girls I could relate to. One mother asked me to walk her nine-year girl (Rhoda Edwards) to school. Her father had been killed at Morenci Mine and Rhoda never wanted to return to school, so I met her daily and we were pals. The next door boy where we got our water from hated me and would throw rocks at me. Joe Burleson, I didn't like him either! Daddy would take us up to home every weekend, and take our load of wood back with us on Sunday.

When summer came I was pretty much tied down to the kitchen and helping Alma take care of her little boys, up to three by now. I had all of the cooking to do. Worth worked with daddy and packed ore down from the mines by burro train. The burros really belonged to Art Dahlin in Walker. Finally daddy took Worth and I up to Colorado to see mamma and Casey. She ran a laundry for miners out of their house. I was hoping he would let me stay as Casey my stepfather wanted to send me to school. By this time I felt I wanted to become a beautician or a dancer. Possibly a schoolteacher so I could teach my half brothers. But daddy wouldn't let us stay so it was back to Arizona. Casey had paid our way up there to see them. Later mamma and Casey moved back to Arizona and

daddy and Casey went into partnership together so that we could be with our mom. The first night in Arizona, Casey slept on the cot with Worth's smelly mattress. In the middle of the night, he yelled at mamma to "get these things off of me!" The bedbugs had taken over the mattress, they liked the smell and didn't bite Worth, but liked the taste of Casey. We all moved to Walker from Poland. All of my life I had heard of Walker over the hill and had visions of streetcars and a big city. It was sure a letdown to find Walker not much different than Big Bug except for a CCC camp and some teenagers who lived there. They worked at the old Pine Mountain mine first then we moved to what was called the Bates Ranch or Five-Mile Ranch (five miles from Prescott). There were two houses and they mined there someplace. I never knew which mines they were working on. When we first moved to Walker, we lived in a couple of old houses just below the Sheldon mine and Worth and I got to stay with mamma and Casey. We lived in a small cabin that Art Dahlin had built. There were some teenagers here and we began to have fun with kids our own age. They were all not in school because there was no school here. Nobody could afford to go to town for school. Life changed for the better, I was seventeen by now. Life was much more fun. We played cards, built big campfires at night and howled with the coyotes. We hiked, explored and played hard with the other kids. A summer CCC camp came in to the Walker area to clean up the beetles that were killing the forest. Needless to say the other two girls my age, Florence Rose and Elnora Hanning and myself enjoyed many hikes up to the lookout towers and around with all of these handsome boys.

Soon we moved to the old Bates Ranch again. We had fruit and gardens and mamma had chickens. Money being tight, Casey shot a porcupine and mamma roasted him. He was beautiful, only no one could stand to eat it, so we tossed it out. From here Worth and I began to get into town (Prescott) more often with some of the other kids. Worth got a car and he and I went to some dances and began to spend more time in town. I even got a couple of childcare and housekeeping jobs in town. I worked longest for one widow. She had two little boys, two and four years old. She had an apartment in back of her house and I had to wash and iron little suits, four each day for the boys. I had to keep them and the house spotless. I did meet two Italian girls and their young aunt and ran around and stayed with them a lot.

On the third of July 1938, I went in with a friend of Worth's, to cancel a date with a girl he knew, and she invited me to join her and her date and others for the day and a meet blind date. I refused the blind date at first, then they took me to meet him. I soon changed my mind. His name was John Bykerk. Now I had a date and I knew we were going to be in the parade and have fun. We painted an old Maxwell car up with crazy sayings and drove it in the parade. After the parade, we ate and then went to the rodeo. Later to dance at the Granite Dells dance hall and John brought me home at dawn. Mamma was out in her bathrobe feeding the chickens. John had to help me get mamma's tall, tight fitting boots off of me (no zipper). Since I had no clothes of my own, I had borrowed mamma's boots and riding breeches, the kind the English wore fox hunting, my brother's good tan shirt and even my stepmother's underpants.

John and I began to date regular, then by October 26, we got married in Nogales,

Arizona. It was after 5pm by the time we got to the courthouse and the judge came down to do the honors. We went across the border for dinner.

I helped his asthmatic sister (Jake) with her housework in Tucson. John and his brother-in-law, Ed, both got jobs. We settled in Tucson and raised our family. We were active in Scouts, school PTA, Gray-Y Club, YMCA and YWCA.

In March of 1939, we got word that Worth had been killed in a mine cave-in in Walker. John and I drove all the way to Prescott all night. Mamma came from Colorado and daddy was already here. It was a very sad and hard time on all of us.

We enjoyed all of the things we did for and with our children. We now have seven wonderful grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. We cannot complain over what problems we had even when money was tight part of the time. All of those years is another story. I do feel that we have lived during the better time of our country and wish more people could be grateful for what they do have and not be so greedy and crime minded.

Lorrene Arilla (Pritchett) Bykerk
November 17, 1919
February 12, 2002